Amendments to the Claims:

1 1. (currently amended) A method for policy-enabled, contract-based management of a

2 network operational support system that comprises a set of programs designed to

3 support various network management functions, comprising the steps of:

4 in response to a network system state change, receiving one or more conditions that

5 represent the current state of the network system;

6 determining whether native policies within the operational support system address the

7 one or more conditions;

8 in response to determining that the native policies do not address the one or more

9 conditions,

10 comparing the one or more conditions to one or more conditions addressed by

11 one or more policy views of respective one or more policy

12 management systems that are logically separate from the operational

13 support system;

14 based on comparing, determining at least one particular policy management

15 system that addresses the one or more conditions that represent the

16 current state of the network system;

17 requesting a policy view from ~~one or more~~ the at least one particular policy

18 management system[[s]] ~~that are logically separate from the~~

19 ~~operational support system~~, wherein the policy view comprises a set of

20 required policies that address one or more of the conditions that

21 represent the current state of the network system;

22   receiving one or more executable policies, from the <u>at least one particular</u> policy

23   management system, capable of supporting the required policies of the

24   requested policy view, <u>wherein selection of the one or more executable</u>

25   <u>policies is</u> based on a contract that defines one or more criteria that the

26   selected executable policies must satisfy; and

27   implementing the requested policy view by executing the selected executable policies.

1   2.   (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the operational support system comprises a

2   set of native policies indigenous to the operational support system, and further

3   comprising the step of identifying a behavioral exception when none of the native

4   policies is capable of supporting the requested policy view.

1   3.   (original) The method of Claim 2 wherein the requesting step is carried out only in

2   response to a behavioral exception in the operational support system.

1   4.   (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the requesting step further comprises the

2   step of inventorying the available policy views of the policy management system.

1   5.   (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the policy management system comprises

2   an external policy engine, further comprising the step of causing the policy view to

3   initiate the contract for the selection and importation of the executable policies from

4   the external policy engine.

1   6.   (original) The method of Claim 5 wherein the contract comprises one or more pre-

2   conditions, one or more post-conditions, one or more environmental requirements and

3   one or more policy dependency rules.

1   7. (original) The method of Claim 6 further comprising the step of causing the contract

2   to apply the environmental requirements to the selected executable policies to enable

3   the selected executable policies to run on the operational support system.

1   8. (original) The method of Claim 6 further comprising the step of causing the contract

2   to apply the policy dependency rules to two or more of the selected executable

3   policies when the behaviors of the two or more selected executable policies are in

4   conflict with one another.

1   9. (original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the policy management system comprises a

2   policy export engine, and the receiving step further comprises the step of importing

3   the selected executable policies from the policy export engine.

1   10. (currently amended) A method for policy-enabled, contract-based management of an

2   operational support system that comprises a set of programs designed to support

3   various network management functions, the method implemented by a policy kernel

4   in the operational support system that is communicatively coupled to one or more

5   policy management systems, comprising the steps of:

6   in response to a network system state change, receiving one or more conditions that

7   represent the current state of the network system;

8   determining whether native policies within the operational support system address the

9   one or more conditions;

10   in response to determining that the native policies do not address the one or more

11   conditions,

12   comparing the one or more conditions to one or more conditions addressed by

13   one or more policy views of respective one or more policy

14   management systems that are logically separate from the operational

15   support system;

16   based on comparing, determining at least one particular policy management

17   system that addresses the one or more conditions that represent the

18   current state of the network system;

19   requesting a policy view from ~~one or more~~ the at least one particular management

20   system[[s]], wherein the policy view comprises a set of required policies that

21   address one or more of the conditions that represent the current state of the

22   network system;

23   receiving one or more executable policies, from the at least one particular policy

24   management system, capable of supporting the required policies of the requested

25   policy view, wherein selection of the one or more executable policies is based

26   on a contract that defines one or more criteria that the selected executable

27   policies must satisfy; and

28   implementing the requested policy view by executing the selected executable policies.

1   11.   (original) The method of Claim 10 wherein the policy kernel comprises a set of native

2   policies indigenous to the policy kernel, and further comprising the step of identifying

3   a behavioral exception when none of the native policies is capable of supporting the

4   requested policy view.

1   12.   (original) The method of Claim 11 wherein the requesting step is carried out only in

2   response to a behavioral exception in the policy kernel.

1   13.   (original) The method of Claim 10 wherein the requesting step further comprises the

2   step of inventorying the available policy views of the policy management system.

1   14.   (original) The method of Claim 10 wherein the policy kernel comprises one or more

2   policy access points, and further comprising the step of enabling the policy access

3   points to provide an interface between the policy kernel and the policy management

4   system.

1   15.   (original) The method of Claim 14 further comprising the step of inventorying the

2   available policy access points of the policy kernel.

1   16.   (original) The method of Claim 14 wherein the policy access point is associated with

2   a particular policy management system among a plurality of policy management

3   systems.

1   17.   (original) The method of Claim 14 further comprising the step of disabling the policy

2   access point to terminate the interface between the policy kernel and the policy

3   management system.

1   18.   (original) The method of Claim 10 wherein the policy management system comprises

2   an external policy engine, further comprising the step of causing the policy view to

3   initiate the contract for the selection and importation of the executable policies from

4   the external policy engine.

1   19.   (original) The method of Claim 18 wherein the contract comprises one or more pre-

2   conditions, one or more post-conditions, one or more environmental requirements and

3   one or more policy dependency rules.

1   20.   (original) The method of Claim 19 further comprising the step of causing the contract

2   to apply the environmental requirements to the selected executable policies to enable

3   the selected executable policies to run on the policy kernel.

1   21.   (original) The method of Claim 19 further comprising the step of causing the contract

2   to apply the policy dependency rules to two or more of the selected executable

3   policies when the behaviors of the two or more selected executable policies are in

4   conflict with one another.

1   22.   (original) The method of Claim 10 wherein the policy management system comprises

2   a policy export engine, and the receiving step further comprises the step of importing

3   the selected executable policies from the policy export engine.

1   23.   (currently amended) A method for policy-enabled, contract-based management of an

2   operational support system that comprises a set of programs designed to support

3   various network management functions, the method implemented by a policy kernel,

4   wherein the policy kernel comprises one or more policy access points and each policy

5   access point is associated with a particular policy management system, the method

6   comprising the steps of:

7   inventorying the policy access points of the policy kernel;

8   inventorying one or more policy views from one or more of the policy management

9   systems, wherein the policy view comprises a set of required policies that address

10   one or more conditions that represent the state of a network system;

11   requesting one of the policy views from the inventory of policy views based on which

12   policy view comprises one or more policies that address the current state of the

13   network system being supported by the operational support system;

14   enabling the policy access point corresponding to the associated policy management

15   system capable of supporting the requested policy view;

16   causing a contract of the requested policy view to be initiated for the selection of

17   executable policies from an external policy engine of the policy management

18   system;

19   causing the contract to apply environmental requirements to the selected executable

20   policies to enable the selected executable policies to ~~run~~ execute on the policy

21   kernel;

22   causing the contract to apply dependency rules to two or more of the selected

23   executable policies when the behaviors of the two or more selected executable

24   policies are in conflict with one another;

25   importing the selected executable policies from a policy export engine of the policy

26   management system; and

27   implementing the requested policy view by executing the selected executable policies.

1   24.   (currently amended) A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of

2   instructions for policy-enabled, contract-based management of a network operational

3   support system that comprises a set of programs designed to support various network

4   management functions, which instructions, when executed by one or more processors,

5   cause the one or more processors to carry out the steps of:

6   in response to a network system state change, receiving one or more conditions that

7   represent the current state of the network system;

8   determining whether native policies within the operational support system address the

9   one or more conditions;

10   in response to determining that the native policies do not address the one or more

11   conditions,

12   comparing the one or more conditions to one or more conditions addressed by

13   one or more policy views of respective one or more policy

14   management systems that are logically separate from the operational

15   support system;

16   based on comparing, determining at least one particular policy management

17   system that addresses the one or more conditions that represent the

18   current state of the network system;

19   requesting a policy view from ~~one or more~~ the at least one particular policy

20   management system[[s]] ~~that are logically separate from the~~

21   ~~operational support system~~, wherein the policy view comprises a set of

22   required policies that address one or more of the conditions that

23   represent the current state of the network system;

24   receiving one or more executable policies, from the at least one particular policy

25   management system, capable of supporting the required policies of the

26   requested policy view, wherein selection of the one or more executable

27   <u>policies is</u> based on a contract that defines one or more criteria that the

28   selected executable policies must satisfy; and

29   implementing the requested policy view by executing the selected executable policies.

1   25. (currently amended) A system for policy-enabled, contract-based management of

2   operational support systems <u>that comprise a set of programs designed to support</u>

3   <u>various network management functions</u>, comprising:

4   <u>means for receiving, in response to a network system state change, one or more</u>

5   <u>conditions that represent the current state of the network system;</u>

6   <u>means for determining whether native policies within the operational support system</u>

7   <u>address the one or more conditions;</u>

8   <u>means for comparing the one or more conditions to one or more conditions addressed</u>

9   <u>by one or more policy views of respective one or more policy management</u>

10   <u>systems that are logically separate from the operational support system;</u>

11   <u>means for determining at least one particular policy management system that</u>

12   <u>addresses the one or more conditions that represent the current state of the</u>

13   <u>network system;</u>

14   means for requesting a policy view from ~~one or more~~ <u>the at least one particular</u> policy

15   management system[[s]] ~~that are logically separate from the operational~~

16   ~~support system~~, wherein the policy view comprises a set of required policies

17   <u>that address one or more of the conditions that represent the current state of</u>

18   <u>the network system;</u>

19   means for receiving one or more executable policies, from the <u>at least one particular</u>

20   <u>policy management system,</u> capable of supporting the required policies of the

21   requested policy view, <u>wherein selection of the one or more executable</u>

22   <u>policies is</u> based on a contract that defines one or more criteria that the

23   selected executable policies must satisfy; and

24   means for implementing the requested policy view by executing the selected

25   executable policies.

1   26.   (currently amended) A system for policy-enabled, contract-based management of

2   operational support systems <u>that comprise a set of programs designed to support</u>

3   <u>various network management functions</u>, comprising:

4   a policy kernel for executing policies of a policy view on the operational support

5   system; and

6   one or more policy access points that are communicatively coupled to one or more

7   policy management systems, the policy management system including one or

8   more executable policies and one or more policy views, the policy views

9   containing a set of required policies and a contract that defines one or more

10   criteria that the executable policies must satisfy.